

Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC)

Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2014

Present: Kevin Bain, Alonzo Weems, Tammy Veselsky, Connie Sherman, Charlie Geier, John Burnett, Beckie Minglin, Melanie Brizzi

Absent: N/A

Next meeting: Friday, April 4, 2014 from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Indiana Government Center South Conference Center

1. Announcements

N/A

2. Discussion

1. Review of Minutes from last meeting, held January 17, 2014:

The minutes were approved.

2. Early Education Matching Grant RFF Update and Timetable—Melanie Brizzi

Melanie updated the committee on the EEMG RFF (<http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4845.htm>).

The Bureau of Child Care received about 30 applications that were received from many different counties across the state. The applications will be assigned to the grant reviewers next week. The reviewers come from a variety of professional backgrounds and will be grouped in teams of 3 to score each application. Training was held last week for grant reviewers to go over the scoring rubric and application requirements. Awards will be announced in mid-April.

A question was raised about whether there will be a second RFF release and round of grant awards; it was noted that it would depend on how much money is awarded with this round—if most of the money is obligated now, there will not be another round. The example given was 90 percent obligated versus 50 percent obligated.

The RFF for the Evaluation of the EEMG was posted on Tuesday, March 4th. Recommendations for the components of this RFF came from the same work group that made evaluation recommendations for the EEMG. Amanda Lopez drafted the RFF. Responses are due at the end of March. The Bureau of Child Care has received questions regarding the short turn-around time for this; in response to such questions it was noted that BCC needs at least four months to execute a grant agreement.

3. Discussion of Workgroup Strategic Framework—Kevin Bain

ELAC members submitted their feedback to Kevin regarding the Workgroup Strategic Framework.

Because each workgroup could potentially have many focus areas, Kevin encouraged the committee to think about the most pressing issues for each group to tackle; existing momentum to build from; and existing groups that could drive or provide input to the workgroups.

A review of the statutory requirements was requested. Kevin reviewed the requirements and presented a draft document outlining the proposed ELAC workgroup framework. The workgroups in this framework included: Evaluation of Child Outcomes; Child Readiness; Data Coordination/System Building; Funding Streams, Family Engagement; Professional Development; Provider Participation/Advancement.

The committee discussed the Primary Objectives proposed for each group.

Evaluation of Child Outcomes

→ It was noted that evaluation of long-term sustainability might also fall here

Child Readiness

→ Kevin explained that this group would be responsible for the coordination of interventions and initiatives and that “Readiness” extends beyond kindergarten readiness to the 3rd grade.

→ A question was raised about representation from the Department of Health to address health standards

→ ELAC was cautioned against using the term “spectrum” (e.g. birth to 3rd grade ‘spectrum’) and was asked to use the word “continuum” instead. “Spectrum” has a public perception associated with special education and autism.

→ It was noted that the title “Child Readiness” has a connotation of preparing children for kindergarten; it was suggested that the group also focus on children’s current development and well-being

Family Engagement

→ A suggestion was made that the group’s primary objectives should also include kindergarten through 3rd grade and the related transitions.

→ A concern was raised that the group is missing an evaluation component; it was noted that a Family Engagement focus can be added to the Evaluation workgroup.

→ A question was raised about the “training and tools” listed in the workgroup’s primary responsibilities. It was noted that the division is charged with increasing parent engagement, and this will involve training and tools.

→ A suggestion was made that the workgroup’s responsibilities include looking at and adopting one or more best practice(s) for parental/family engagement.

Provider Participation/Advancement

→ A suggestion was made to remove “care” from the primary objective — e.g. “...to assist families in their care decision-making process.”

Professional Development

→ It was suggested that workforce compensation be included in the group’s primary objectives. A question was raised about ongoing data collection related to the number of professionals in the workforce and levels of compensation; Dianna Wallace from Indiana AEYC responded that Indiana AEYC is in the process of its third Workforce Study. The first two studies were conducted in 2005 and 2010 and included county-level statistics on workforce degrees, certifications, and average wages and benefits. The study correlates with work done in 23 other states but does not include professionals working in Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

→ It was suggested that the workgroup title be amended to include “Workforce Development”

Funding Streams

→ It was noted that the Bureau of Child Care’s current reporting does not include information on child care in the private sector or the number of children served by age range

Data Coordination/System Building

→ A suggestion was made that part of this group’s role could be advocating to get information included in databases- for example, Early Learning Data is missing from SLDS (State Longitudinal Data System).

→ It was recommended that the ELAC identify the steps to build the database infrastructure and get started with recommendations as soon as possible. Database work is already underway in multiple agencies and the most critical time to be involved is during the tech development stage.

→ It was noted that this group can look at what other states are doing and develop recommendations.

→ A question was raised about whether attorneys should be involved in the group to advise on issues like HIPAA.

→ A suggestion was made to include the relationship/trust component between pre-k program teachers and K-3 program teachers. Data collection is more than just numbers- it also involves the qualitative piece and communication. The workgroup’s role could include best practice recommendations for communication/coordination/collaboration between ECE programs and K-3 classrooms.

Kevin reminded the ELAC that the goal is to have workgroup chairs/co-chairs in place by April 25th when John Burnett is hosting a workshop for the committee. Kevin also made the following clarifications to the ELAC regarding workgroup recruitment:

→ Participation is an opportunity to shape what is recommended at multiple levels of state government and to have an impact

→ Assume that workgroups will meet monthly between ELAC meetings (meetings do not have to be held at IGCS)

→ Concerted effort is needed to draw people from various geographic areas of Indiana.

4. Other Business

Agreement was reached on the ELAC meeting schedule. ELAC will meet on the second Friday of every month from 1-3 at the Indiana Government Center South.